



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Contact:**

**Raechel Sattazahn**  
**Northeast NAIDC Publicity Chair**  
**717-796-9372 ext. 6016**  
**717-796-9830 (fax)**  
**RSattazahn@AgChoice.com**

## **109 Students from 12 Colleges Participate in 13th Annual Northeast Regional Dairy Challenge®**

State College, PA, October 27, 2015 – Penn State University hosted a successful Northeast Regional Dairy Challenge that drew 109 students from 10 northeastern U.S. and two Canadian universities to State College, Pa., October 22-24, 2015. This event marked the 13th annual Northeast Regional Dairy Challenge which is an innovative, three-day educational competition designed to prepare students for careers in the dairy industry.

Working in mixed-university teams of four or five students, contestants assessed all aspects of a working dairy farm, including facilities, nutrition, financials, reproduction, animal health and much more. Students collaborated on a 20-minute team presentation that detailed their observations and suggestions to a panel of judges and participating farm families. Teams were ranked based on how well their evaluations matched the judges' assessment of the dairy operation.

The objective of Dairy Challenge is to create a real-life situation that stresses the importance of teamwork and professionalism. Industry chair Suzanne Demeester of Novus International, Inc. explained, "Not only does the Dairy Challenge teach technical knowledge, it excels in helping students develop people skills."

Farms evaluated at the 2015 competition included Schrack Farms in Loganton, Pa.; Ti Glo Farm in Howard, Pa. and Willow Behrer Farms in Spruce Creek, Pa. All teams also participated in educational workshops at Evergreen Farms in Spruce Creek, Pa. Team-building and fun activities were held throughout the weekend to encourage networking among students and dairy industry sponsors.

First place teams, which were named after top sponsors of the Northeast Regional Dairy Challenge, included: Holtz-Nelson Dairy Consultants, LLC, Semex and Merck Animal Health.

The 2016 Northeast Regional Dairy Challenge will be hosted by SUNY Cobleskill. For more information about next year's contest, please contact Kim Tarvis at tarviskm@cobleskill.edu. To become a sponsor, contact Jan Bitter of Farm Credit East at 800-392-3276 or

jan.bitter@farmcrediteast.com. All contributions are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. Contributing sponsor listings are available at [www.dairychallenge.org](http://www.dairychallenge.org).

### ***About Dairy Challenge***

NAIDC is an innovative event for students in dairy programs at North American post-secondary institutions. Its mission is to develop tomorrow's dairy leaders and enhance progress of the dairy industry, by providing education, communication and networking among students, producers, and agribusiness and university personnel. Over its 14-year national history, Dairy Challenge has helped prepare more than 5,000 students for careers as farm owners and managers, consultants, researchers, veterinarians or other dairy professionals.

The 2016 national competition and Dairy Challenge Academy will be April 7-9 in Syracuse, NY. Four regional contests are held in late fall and winter; details are at [www.dairychallenge.org](http://www.dairychallenge.org)

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**Photo caption 1:** (From left to right) Sarah Meyers, a mentor from AgChoice Farm Credit, and students Breana Scribner of SUNY Cobleskill, Jaylene Lesher of Penn State University and Kohlton Butler of Vermont Technical College take notes on the heifer facilities while evaluating Ti Glo Farm in Howard, Pa.

**Photo caption 2:** (From left to right) Naomi Kenny of Morrisville State College, Ashley Howlett of Cornell University, Britney Hill of SUNY Cobleskill, and Erica Boutelle of Alfred State College discuss their farm evaluation of Willow Behrer Farms during the Northeast Regional Dairy Challenge.

**Photo Caption 3:** Students visit and evaluate Schrack Farms during the Northeast Regional Dairy Challenge.

**Photo caption 4:** Participants, sponsors and planning committee members of the 2014 Northeast Regional Dairy Challenge in State College, PA.

**Photo caption 5:** Students on Team 7 – Holtz-Nelson Dairy Consultants, LLC earned first place among teams evaluating Schrack Farms of Loganton, Pa. Front row (left to right): Gabrielle Domagala, SUNY Cobleskill; Joshua Landis, Cornell University. Back row (left to right): Lucas Senn, McGill University; Caitlin Moriarty, Vermont Technical College.

**Photo caption 6:** Students on Team 12 - Semex earned first place among teams evaluating Willow Behrer Farms of Spruce Creek, Pa. Front row (left to right): Stephanie Luders, Morrisville State College; Katelynn Howden, Alfred State College. Back row (left to right): Matthew Driscoll, Delaware Valley University; Jamie Kayhart, SUNY Cobleskill; Benjamin Young, Cornell University.

**Photo caption 7:** Students on Team 20 – Merck Animal Health earned first place among teams evaluating Ti Glo Farm of Howard, Pa. Front row (left to right): Heather Theriault, University of Maine; Jaycie Staring, SUNY Cobleskill. Back row (left to right): Matthew Burns, McGill University; Shannon O'Sullivan, Morrisville State College; Jacob Dueppengesser, Cornell University.

**For high resolution versions of the photos, please visit the Dairy Challenge Media Gallery at [http://www.dairychallenge.org/media\\_gallery.php](http://www.dairychallenge.org/media_gallery.php).**